



NEWS RELEASE

January 15, 2003

McAllen Border Patrol Sector Initiates Operation "Door Stop"

Operation Addresses Increased Illegal Immigration Activity Along Highway Corridors

McALLEN, Texas – The McAllen Sector has historically experienced a major influx of illegal aliens at the beginning of each year. The influx is directly related to the seasonal migration of undocumented immigrants before and after the Christmas holiday season.

Normally aliens return to their homelands during the months of November and December and return back after the holidays. In preparation for the anticipated increase of illegal entries of undocumented immigrants due to the annual migration patterns, the McAllen Sector has implemented a comprehensive operation designed to enhance current enforcement operations such as "Operation Rio Grande" to deter and prevent any illegal activity along the major highways leading north away from the border.

In August 1997, the McAllen Border Patrol Sector began Operation Rio Grande, marking the beginning of a new look and attitude of the U. S. Border Patrol in the McAllen Sector. As a result of Operation Rio Grande, the McAllen Sector has increased its manpower and tactical infrastructure almost threefold. This has enabled the Sector to increase pressure upon the normal routes of travel used by undocumented immigrants, smugglers of narcotics, border bandits that prey upon the unsuspecting undocumented immigrants, and smugglers of undocumented immigrants -- also known as "Coyotes". Since it's inception, yearly apprehension statistics have decreased significantly.

In preparation for the annual increase of illegal activity, McAllen Sector implemented Operation "Door Stop" on Jan. 12. This operation will compliment Border Patrol checkpoint operations in the McAllen Sector. The majority of the undocumented immigrants entering through the Rio Grande Valley travel north via U. S. Highway 281 or U. S. Highway 77.

The Kingsville and Falfurrias Border Patrol Stations maintain 24-hour traffic checkpoints on both of these highways. These checkpoints impede the organizations that conduct alien and narcotics smuggling operations in south Texas. Agents will be conducting roving patrol and sign cutting operations at strategic points just south of the checkpoints. Enhancement of personnel and resources from various stations within the sector will be utilized during this operation.

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NOTE TO NEWS MEDIA: *McAllen Sector welcomes any news media crews or reporters who would like to ride along with the Border Patrol Agents and get a first hand view of Operation "Door Stop". Those interested in the ride along program can contact Public Affair Officers Xavier Rios or Bobby Martinez at 956-984-3848 or 956-984-3855.*